



# **Lynn Public Library**

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# Lynn Public Library

## Collection Development and Maintenance Policy

### I. Collection Goals

The Lynn Public Library's objective in selecting materials is to make available a well-balanced, up-to-date, accurate and desirable collection that meets the literary, cultural, informational, educational, and recreational needs for people of all ages.

*Library Mission Statement: The Lynn Public Library is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of knowledge for future generations. The mission of the Lynn Public Library is to provide free and equal access to materials, programs, services, and information that serve the cultural, educational, recreational needs of its diverse community. The library is a community resource free to all where we strive to encourage, inspire, educate, and enlighten our patrons of all ages.*

### II. Policy Statement

This policy statement is intended as a guide for the selection, acquisition, maintenance, de-selection and discarding of print and non-print materials for the Lynn Public Library and as a reflection of the library's continuing commitment to meet the needs of the public of which it serves.

### III. Selection Responsibility

Responsibility for selections resides ultimately with the director of the library who operates within the framework of policies determined by the Board of Trustees. This responsibility is delegated by the director to department heads within the library.

### IV. Selection Criteria

The Lynn Public Library's selection policy shall be in full accordance with the Library Bill of Rights and subscribe to the principles of Intellectual Freedom. The Lynn Public Library uses the following criteria in the selection process:

- Budget allocation
- Public demand/community interest
- Reputation and significance of author, producer, publisher.
- Local significance of author or subject
- Validity, currency, and appropriateness of materials
- Current and anticipated appeal
- Adds to the scope of the collection
- Quality and variety of format
- Timeliness or permanence
- Accuracy
- Critical reviews
- Price and availability

## **V. Collection Maintenance**

Weeding and de-selecting materials is an essential part of the collection development process. All collections are re-evaluated continuously for accuracy, currency, and responsiveness to user needs.

General guidelines for collection management are adapted from the CREW method. CREW stands for Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding. The CREW method gives six general criteria for considering weeding an item from the collection which are summarized with the acronym MUSTIE:

Misleading—factually inaccurate

Ugly – worn beyond mending or rebinding

Superseded – by a new edition of/or by a much better book on the subject

Trivial – of no discernible literary or scientific merit

Irrelevant to the needs and interests of the library's community

Elsewhere – the material is easily obtainable from another library

## **VI. Discarding materials**

De-selected items that no longer meet the library's standards may be offered to the Friends of the Lynn Public Library, given to other libraries or community agencies, donated to charitable organizations\*, or recycled at the discretion of the Lynn Public Library.

(\*Approved by the Lynn City Council Public Property Committee 10/9/18)

## **VII. Gifts/Donations**

Gifts of materials from individuals and/or organizations are evaluated according to the same selection criteria that governs the acquisition of purchased materials for inclusion in the library collection. Items that are not added to the collection are considered discarded materials.

## **VIII. Patron Requests**

Patrons may request the library purchase items it does not own. Request to Purchase forms are available at the main desk. All requests are reviewed using the selection criteria stated in this policy.

## **IX. Controversial Materials**

The Lynn Public Library asserts its rights and duty to keep on its shelves a representative selection of materials on all subjects of interest to our patrons and not prohibited by law, including those materials on all sides of controversial issues. Materials on a subject, if published by a reputable and well known publisher and sold without restriction elsewhere, are properly admitted to the Lynn Public Library.

Libraries do not approve, endorse, or disapprove of the contents of books or other materials. The Lynn Public Library advocates the individual's right to expression, and the individual's right to access ideas and information.

Responsibility for children's reading/viewing rest with the parents or legal guardians. Parents or legal guardians are the only ones who may restrict their children, and only their children, from access to library materials. Minors have free access to library materials in all departments. The library staff does not serve *in loco parentis* (in place of the parent).

## **X. Reconsideration of Materials**

Materials whose appropriateness is challenged shall not be removed from the library except upon the recommendation of the reconsideration committee, with the concurrence of the library director.

Patrons who wish to request reconsideration of library materials shall complete and sign the “Request for Reconsideration” form provided by the library.

### Procedures for handling complaints

- All complaints to staff members shall be reported to the department head or library director
- The department head or library director shall contact the complainant to discuss the complaint and attempt to resolve it informally by explaining the philosophy and goals of the library
- If the complaint is not resolved informally, the complainant shall be supplied with a packet of materials consisting of this policy, and procedure for handling complaints
- Upon receipt of the completed reconsideration form, the library director shall convene a committee of five to consider the complaint. This committee will consist of library trustees and library staff appointed by the director.
- The committee shall meet to discuss the materials and shall prepare a report on the material containing its recommendations on the disposition of the matter.
- The library director shall notify the complainant of the decision in writing.

## **XI. Information File**

- Library Bill of Rights
- Freedom to Read Statement
- Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
  - Minors and Internet Activity: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Challenged Resources: An interpretation of the library Bill of Rights
- Reconsideration of Materials form
- Request to Purchase form

## **Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

# Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

### **Freedom to Read Statement continued:**

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

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This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

*A Joint Statement by:*

American Library Association

Association of American Publishers

# **Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors**

## **An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources and services available to other users violate the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation. Equitable access to all library resources and services shall not be abridged through restrictive scheduling or use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, sound, images, data, games, software, and other formats.<sup>1</sup> Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them.<sup>2</sup> Librarians and library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections because only a court of law can determine whether or not content is constitutionally protected.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize librarians or library governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As "Libraries: An American Value" states, "We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services." Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children's—and only their children's—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children.

Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, or format. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.



<sup>1</sup> *Brown v. Entertainment Merchant's Association, et al.* 564 U.S. 08-1448 (2011): a) Video games qualify for First Amendment protection. Like protected books, plays, and movies, they communicate ideas through familiar literary devices and features distinctive to the medium. And 'the basic principles of freedom of speech . . . do not vary' with a new and different communication medium."

<sup>2</sup> *Erznoznik v. City of Jacksonville*, 422 U.S. 205 (1975): "Speech that is neither obscene as to youths nor subject to some other legitimate proscription cannot be suppressed solely to protect the young from ideas or images that a legislative body thinks unsuitable for them. In most circumstances, the values protected by the First Amendment are no less applicable when government seeks to control the flow of information to minors." See also *Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist.*, 393 U.S.503 (1969); *West Virginia Bd. of Ed. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624 (1943); *AAMA v. Kendrick*, 244 F.3d 572 (7th Cir. 2001).

Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council; amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008 *under previous name* "Free Access to Libraries for Minors"; and July 1, 2014.

# Minors and Internet Activity

## An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

The digital environment offers opportunities for accessing, creating, and sharing information. The rights of minors to retrieve, interact with, and create information posted on the Internet in schools and libraries are extensions of their First Amendment rights. (See also other Interpretations of the American Library Association's *Library Bill of Rights*, including "Access to Digital Information, Services, and Networks," "Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors.")

Academic pursuits of minors can be strengthened with the use of interactive web tools, allowing young people to create documents and share them online; to upload pictures, videos, and graphic material; to revise public documents; and to add tags to online content to classify and organize information. Instances of inappropriate use of such academic tools should be addressed as individual behavior issues, not as justification for restricting or banning access to interactive technology. Schools and libraries should ensure that institutional environments offer opportunities for students to use interactive web tools constructively in their academic pursuits, as the benefits of shared learning are well documented.

Personal interactions of minors can be enhanced by social tools available through the Internet. Social networking websites allow the creation of online communities that feature an open exchange of information in various forms, such as images, videos, blog posts, and discussions about common interests.

Interactive web tools help children and young adults learn about and organize social, civic, and extra-curricular activities. Many interactive sites invite users to establish online identities, share personal information, create Web content, and join social networks. Parents and guardians play a critical role in preparing their children for participation in online activity by communicating their personal family values and by monitoring their children's use of the Internet. Parents and guardians are responsible for what their children—and only their children—access on the Internet in libraries.

The use of interactive web tools poses two competing intellectual freedom issues—the protection of minors' privacy and the right of free speech. Some have expressed concerns regarding what they perceive to be an increased vulnerability of young people in the online environment when they use interactive sites to post personally identifiable information. In an effort to protect minors' privacy, adults sometimes restrict access to interactive web environments. Filters, for example, are sometimes used to restrict access by youth to interactive social networking tools, but at the same time deny minors' rights to free expression on the Internet. Prohibiting children and young adults from using social networking sites does not teach safe behavior and leaves youth without the necessary knowledge and skills to protect their privacy or engage in responsible speech. Instead of restricting or denying access to the Internet, librarians and teachers should educate minors to participate responsibly, ethically, and safely.

The First Amendment applies to speech created by minors on interactive sites. Use of these social networking sites in a school or library allows minors to access and create resources that fulfill their interests and needs for information, for social connection with peers, and for participation in a community of learners. Restricting expression and access to interactive web sites because the sites provide tools for sharing information with others violates the tenets of the *Library Bill of Rights*. It is the responsibility of librarians and educators to monitor threats to the intellectual freedom of minors and to advocate for extending access to interactive applications on the Internet.

As defenders of intellectual freedom and the First Amendment, libraries and librarians have a responsibility to offer unrestricted access to Internet interactivity in accordance with local, state, and federal laws, and to advocate for greater access where it is abridged. School and library professionals should work closely with young people to help them learn skills and attitudes that will prepare them to be responsible, effective and productive communicators in a free society.

Adopted July 15, 2009, by the ALA Council; amended on July 1, 2014

## Challenged Resources

### An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

“Libraries: An American Value” states, “We protect the rights of individuals to express their opinions about library resources and services.” The American Library Association declares as a matter of firm principle that it is the responsibility of every library to have a clearly defined written policy for collection development that includes a procedure for review of challenged resources. Collection development applies to print and media resources or formats in the physical collection. It also applies to digital resources such as databases, e-books and other downloadable and streaming media.

Content filtering is not equivalent to collection development. Content filtering is exclusive, not inclusive, and cannot effectively curate content or mediate access to resources available on the Internet. This should be addressed separately in the library’s acceptable use policy. These policies reflect the American Library Association’s *Library Bill of Rights* and are approved by the appropriate governing authority.

Challenged resources should remain in the collection and accessible during the review process. The *Library Bill of Rights* states in Article I that “Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation,” and in Article II, that “Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.” Freedom of expression is protected by the Constitution of the United States, but constitutionally protected expression is often separated from unprotected expression only by a dim and uncertain line. The Supreme Court has held that the Constitution requires a procedure designed to examine critically all challenged expression before it can be suppressed.<sup>1</sup> This procedure should be open, transparent, and conform to all applicable open meeting and public records laws. Resources that meet the criteria for selection and inclusion within the collection should not be removed.

Therefore, any attempt, be it legal or extra-legal,<sup>2</sup> to regulate or suppress resources in libraries must be closely scrutinized to the end that protected expression is not abridged.

#### Notes

1. *Bantam Books, Inc. v. Sullivan*, 372 U.S. 58 (1963).

2. “Extra-legal” refers to actions that are not regulated or sanctioned by law. These can include attempts to remove or suppress materials by library staff and library board members that circumvent the library’s collection development policy, or actions taken by elected officials or library board members outside the established legal process for making legislative or board decisions. “Legal process” includes challenges to library materials initiated and conducted pursuant to the library’s collection development policy, actions taken by legislative bodies or library boards during official sessions or meetings, or litigation undertaken in courts of law with jurisdiction over the library and the library’s governing body.

Adopted June 25, 1971; amended July 1, 1981; January 10, 1990; January 28, 2009, and July 1, 2014, by the ALA Council.



## Request for Reconsideration of Library Material

Library policy requires that complaints be filled out on this form. A copy of the library's Collection Development and Maintenance Policy will be made available to you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent self? \_\_\_\_ Organization? \_\_\_\_\_

1. Resource on which you are commenting (Please circle one):

Book    Audio    Video    Magazine    Newspaper    Audio Recording    Library program    Library display

Electronic information/network (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author/Producer \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Publication \_\_\_\_\_

Library barcode on item \_\_\_\_\_

2. What brought this resource to your attention?

3. Have you examined the entire resource?

4. To what in this resource do you object? (Please be specific- cite pages, parts, or scenes. Use additional pages if necessary)

5. Are there resource(s) you suggest to provide additional information and/or other viewpoints on this topic?

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Received by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Lynn Public Library

## Request to Purchase

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Library Card number \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Type of Material

Book      DVD      CD      eBook      Magazine      Newspaper      Electronic Resource

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

ISBN \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Publication \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information \_\_\_\_\_

.....  
Library personnel use only

Received by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Purchased/Date/Source \_\_\_\_\_

Not Purchased/Reason \_\_\_\_\_